

My Favorite Thing About

2nd Peter

2nd Peter 3:18

February 12, 2022

Throughout his 2nd letter, Peter warned his readers about the influence of those he called “*false prophets and scoffers*”:

- **2 Peter 1:21 - 2:3** - For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. **They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them** -- bringing swift destruction on themselves. ² Many will follow their shameful ways and **will bring the way of truth into disrepute**. ³ **In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up.**
- **2 Peter 2:12-15** - But these men **blaspheme in matters they do not understand**. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish. ¹³ They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. **Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight**. They are blots and blemishes, **reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you**. ¹⁴ With **eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed -- an accursed brood!** ¹⁵ They have left the straightway and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.
- **2 Peter 2:17-19** - These men are **springs without water and mists driven by a storm**. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. ¹⁸ **For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people** who are just escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹ **They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity** -- for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.
- **2 Peter 3:2-4** - I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. ³ First of all, you must understand that in the last days **scoffers** will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴ They will say, **"Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."**

Which brings us to **My Favorite Thing About 2nd PETER** ---- Peter's assertion that in Jesus we have been given everything we need to live godly lives and his call to keep growing in Grace and the Knowledge of Jesus.

Peter begins and ends his letter with the same call:

- **2 Peter 1:3-8** - His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **2 Peter 3:18** - But grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ....

Growing in our knowledge of Jesus is vital for two reasons:

- It is necessary if we want to advance in faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love.
- It is necessary if we want to be protected from the lies, conspiracy theories, and otherwise bad ju-ju coming from those who claim to be of Christ, but who are clearly wolves in sheep's clothing.

If we think we can rest on our knowledge laurels – that what our knowledge of Jesus was last year is sufficient to see us through this year – we are going to be in for a rude awakening.

Remember what we learned last week. There is a Villain in the story. He is smarter than we are. He is more clever than we are. He works on his craft with relentless enthusiasm and he isn't going to show up in a way we would expect him to.

- **Ellen White {Review and Herald, April 1, 1875}** - Satan, clothed in robes of brightness, appearing like an exalted angel, tempted the world's Redeemer without success. But as he comes to man robed as an angel of light, he has better success. He covers his hideous purposes, and succeeds too well in deluding the unwary who are not firmly anchored upon eternal truth.

Therefore..... we must continue to grow in our knowledge of Jesus and utilize every weapon at our disposal:

- The BELT of Truth
- The BREASTPLATE of Righteousness

- The SHOES of Gospel Peace
- The SHIELD of Faith
- The HELMET of Salvation
- The SWORD of the Spirit {the Word of God}
- PRAYER

Let's examine the world of physical fitness for a moment.

If we want to remain physically fit, we have to do the work every day. We cannot sit on the couch eating chips while watching an exercise video and expect to remain in good physical condition. We will not remain fit through osmosis. We have to do the work.

If we stop doing the work it will not be long before we begin to lose muscle mass -- becoming flabbier and saggier as the days go by.

If we stop doing the work of growing in our knowledge of Jesus the exact same thing will happen. We will lose spiritual muscle mass and will be unable to stand against a far fitter and muscled opponent.

But oh, how we wish this were not true!!

We want to remain spiritually fit. We say, *"I want to love Jesus more and be more like Him. I want to possess the fruits of the spirit."* -- but we rebel against putting any effort into it and come up with lists of reasons why we didn't manage to get in a workout ---- notice Paul's words:

- **Hebrews 5:8-14** - Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek. ¹¹ We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Charles Spurgeon - The way to be steadfast is to go forward. There is no standing except by progression. If you see even such a simple thing as a child's top rolling along your floor at home, you will observe that it will always stand upright as long as it keeps on rolling--but when it stops, down it goes! So is it with the Christian--as long as he is in motion, he stands--but if it were possible for the motion to cease, then the Christian would fall from his steadfastness..... The way to stand, then, is to go forward. The way to be steadfast is to progress. The way to be alive, according to the Apostle, is to *"grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* The more you know of the Savior, the better you must love Him. The more you discover of His beauties, His excellences, His virtues, His perfections, and His glories, the more your soul will be drawn towards Him..... you love Him in proportion to your knowledge! Blessed are the men that improve upon acquaintance! Jesus Christ is one of those blessed ones--the more you know of Him, the more you love Him. Sweet Jesus! When I first saw You, I loved You! When first Your wounded hands and bleeding side were uncovered to me, then I loved You. Ah, but that love is nothing compared with what I have now. And oh, when I shall see You as You are--when my soul becomes changed into love--the love I have now shall seem to have been nothing but a spark compared with that vehement flame of love which I shall have to You then! Know more of Christ.

Peter's greatest fear was that his readers would grow spiritually flabby opening themselves up to the *"fakers and scoffers"*. Therefore, his greatest desire was for them to get stuck in to grace and knowledge. To plant their roots deep in the knowledge of Jesus and suck up every bit of God's lavish and undeserved grace.

The more you know the more you grow and the more you grow the more you are able to stand against the *"fakers and scoffers"*

If you have not planted your roots deep in Jesus you will have no ability to fight against the attacks of the devil. When Wolves in sheep's clothing spread lies in the name of truth.... You will not know the difference.

During WW2, the allies, especially the British counted on the fact that the Germans could be tricked by *"fake intelligence"* because it fitted in with what they had already decided would happen -- Here is a quote from the book *"Operation Mincemeat"*:

"Uncle" John Godfrey identified what he called "wishfulness" and yesmanship" as twin frailties of German intelligence: "If the authorities were clamoring for reports on a certain subject the German Secret Intelligence Service was not above inventing reports based on what they thought probable". The Nazi high command, at the same time, when presented with contradictory intelligence reports, was "inclined to believe the one that fits in best with their own previously formed conceptions." If Hitler's paranoid wishfulness and his underling's craven yesmanship could be exploited, then Operation Barclay {a complex plan to convince the Germans that the Allies were going by-pass Sicily instead of attacking it} might work: the Germans would deceive themselves.

In the spiritual realm that is exactly what the devil is counting on -- that you will buy *"fake intelligence"* because you don't want to know the truth and what the *"fakers"* are selling fits in better with what you want to believe -- and with that..... you deceive yourself.

- **2 Thessalonians 2:9-10** - The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,¹⁰ and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

How do we avoid being swept away into error and destruction?

- **2 Peter 3:18** - ... grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Our Savior, Yeshua the Messiah.... **{Aramaic Bible in Plain English}**

That's My Favorite Thing About 2nd PETER.